

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
10 December 1963**

**CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT: Insurgency in Laos, South Vietnam and Iraq**

**1. Laos**

FAR and neutralist anti-Communist forces, buoyed by recent successes, are continuing to exert pressure on Pathet Lao forces in northern and central Laos. In the Plaine des Jarres area, FAR troops have surrounded the town of Xieng Khouang and appear intent on its capture, while skirmishes continue between Communist and Meo forces in the surrounding area. In central Laos, the FAR--supported by right-wing and neutralist guerrilla teams--has captured Lak Sao and has moved to cut Route 8 between Lak Sao and the North Vietnamese border.

**2. South Vietnam**

The total number of Viet Cong incidents continues to decline from the high of the week following the coup but is still higher than the weekly average last year. Attacks since

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late November have reflected more deliberate planning and execution, however, and have been more productive to the Communists. Government weapons losses continue at a high rate, totaling 374 against Viet Cong losses of 88 last week.

3. Iraq:

A number of army units participating in the Kurdish campaign in the north have been transferred to Baghdad as a counterweight to Baathist-led troops already stationed near the city. However, fighting is continuing in Kurdistan, although on a reduced scale necessitated by winter weather, and the new government appears determined to carry on the war. The Kurds do not appear to have been able to take advantage of the political confusion of the past few weeks to regain the initiative lost to the army last summer.

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